

Message Text

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ORIGIN PM-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 CG-00 DOTE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10
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TO AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY
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COMCOGARD ACTEUR LONDON
COGARD ONSOD WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 180205

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EWWT, US, SP

SUBJECT: OMEGA INSTALLATION IN CANARY ISLANDS

REF: MADRID 07240

1. WASHINGTON APPRECIATES EMBASSY'S EFFORTS FOR OMEGA PROGRAM. AS REQUESTED REFTEL, THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IS PROVIDED FOR USE IN DISCUSSIONS OF OMEGA WITH GOS OFFICIALS. REQUEST EMBASSY TAKE EARLY OPPORTUNITY TO USE THESE POINTS.

A. THE USG BELIEVES THAT IN THE INTEREST OF THE SAFETY OF INTERNATIONAL NAVIGATION, THE PRESENCE OF AN OMEGA MONITOR IN THE CANARY ISLANDS IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT. THE PURPOSE OF THE MONITOR IS TO OBTAIN READINGS OF OMEGA SIGNALS WHICH
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WILL ENABLE NAVIGATORS TO APPLY CORRECTIONS TO THEIR RECEIVERS AND IMPROVE THE OVERALL SAFETY OF NAVIGATION. THERE IS NO OTHER LOCATION IN SPAIN THAT COULD PROVIDE THE SIGNAL DATA REQUIRED.

B. TO DETERMINE ACCURATELY THESE CORRECTIONS, THE U.S. IN COOPERATION WITH MANY COUNTRIES IS ESTABLISHING A WORLDWIDE

NETWORK OF MONITORING STATIONS. THE OVERALL PLAN CALLS FOR

APPROXIMATELY SIXTY STATIONS LOCATED IN 30 COUNTRIES WITH A SEPARATION DISTANCE OF 1500 NM. THESE LOCATIONS WERE CHOSEN IN AREAS OF HIGH TRAFFIC DENSITY FOR WORLD'S MARITIME AND AVIATION COMMUNITY. OMEGA MONITORING STATIONS SUCH AS THAT IN THE CANARIES ARE ALSO LOCATED, FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE UK, NORWAY, GREECE, ITALY, IN THE AZORES, BRAZIL, AUSTRALIA, AND AT REUNION.

C. THE CANARY ISLANDS ARE UNIQUELY LOCATED IN THE CONFLUENCE OF MAJOR SHIPPING ROUTES FOR TANKERS AND BULK CARGO CARRIERS TRANSITING THE MEDITERRANEAN AND CIRCUMNAVIGATING AFRICA. A LARGE NUMBER OF FISHING VESSELS ALSO OPERATE IN THE AREA.

D. THE GROWTH OF TOURISM IN THE CANARY ISLANDS HAS INCREASED AIR TRAVEL TO THE ISLANDS. MAJOR INTERNATIONAL LINES SUCH AS PAN AM, KLM, AND AEROFLOT ARE NOW EQUIPPED WITH OMEGA RECEIVING EQUIPMENT AND IT IS EXPECTED THAT SUCH EQUIPMENT WILL BE CONTINUALLY USED IN THE VICINITY OF THE CANARY ISLANDS. THE OMEGA SYSTEM IS AVAILABLE TO VESSELS AND AIRCRAFT OF ALL COUNTRIES.

E. DOT/COGARD ADVISES THAT REGULATIONS FOR TRANSFER OR DISPOSAL OF EQUIPMENT MAKE IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO TURN CONFIDENTIAL

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OMEGA MONITOR OVER TO GOS. WHILE MANY COUNTRIES ARE COOPERATING IN THIS IMPORTANT NAVIGATION SAFETY SYSTEM, ALL MONITOR EQUIPMENT REMAINS THE PROPERTY OF THE USG.

2. DEPARTMENT IS POUCHING ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION WHICH EMBASSY MAY DRAW UPON IN RESPONDING TO FURTHER QUERIES FROM GOS. CHRISTOPHER

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